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PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY.

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1840.

No. 25.

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November 9.

SIR WM. R. HAMILTON, LL.D., President, in the Chair.

The President read a letter from the Secretary of State for the Home Department, informing him that her Majesty had been pleased to receive very graciously the address of the President, Council, and Members of the Royal Irish Academy, congratulating her Majesty on the recent providential deliverance of herself and her illustrious Consort.

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The decease of the Very Rev. the Dean of St. Patrick's, V.P., having been announced to the Academy, it was resolved—

That we have heard with deep regret of the death of our valued Vice-President, the Dean of St. Patrick's; and that while we sympathize with all classes of our fellow-citizens, in lamenting the removal of one so universally beloved and esteemed, we would desire to record our sense of the peculiar loss sustained by the Academy, in being deprived of the assistance of one who could estimate the value of our Institution, and give to it his most cordial cooperation; one who found leisure from the multifarious duties of

his station, to cultivate successfully the researches connected with the antiquities of Ireland, and had earned for himself a high place among those who labour to illustrate her ancient records, or to save from destruction the perishing relics of her former civilization.

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Samuel Ferguson, Esq., was elected to the vacant place in the Council; and the Rev. J. H. Todd, D.D., was appointed by the President, under his hand and seal, to succeed the Dean of St. Patrick's in the office of Vice-President.

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The Rev. T. R. Robinson, D.D., M.R.I.A., gave the Academy an account of a large reflecting telescope, lately constructed by Lord Oxmantown, and of the processes employed in forming its specula.

After explaining the relative importance of magnifying and illuminating power, Dr. R. proceeded to give a brief sketch of the history of the reflecting telescope, which seemed to have been forgotten for many years after its invention, till it was revived by Hadley. The labours of Short soon gave it celebrity; yet even this artist limited himself in almost every instance to sizes which were not more powerful than the achromatics of his day, and his large instruments appear to have been failures.\* It was not till a full century after the publication of Newton's paper, that Sir William Herschel gave this telescope the gigantic development which has crowned him with imperishable fame; and by the construction of telescopes of nineteen

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\* A Newtonian of six feet focus, and 9 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches aperture, is said by Maskelyne to have shewn the first satellite of Jupiter 13" longer than a *triple* achromatic of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches aperture. The telescope of twelve feet focus, and eighteen inches aperture, now at Oxford, shewed multiple rings of Saturn.